



BOARD OF ADVISORS FOR THE  
**UTAH REFUGEE**  
**SERVICES OFFICE**  
REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR

December 1, 2016

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**Department of Workforce Services**  
**Refugee Services Office**  
**[refugee.utah.gov](http://refugee.utah.gov)**

Dear Governor Herbert:

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Refugee Services Office (RSO) Annual Report from the Board of Advisors for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2016, which chronicles the work of more than 30 public employees who assist refugees in the State of Utah. The report highlights the successes and challenges faced in providing substantial programs to refugees in Utah.

Approximately 1,200 refugees are resettled in Utah each year by Catholic Community Services of Utah and International Rescue Committee, adding to the nearly 60,000 refugees who currently call Utah home. Of this group, approximately 99 percent of the refugees in the state reside in the Salt Lake Valley. With sizable refugee populations from Bhutan, Bosnia, Burma, Burundi, Congo, Chad, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Vietnam and the former Soviet Union, among others, the Salt Lake Valley is incredibly diverse. Due to affordable housing constraints, Utah's resettlement agencies began resettling refugees in Ogden in May 2016.

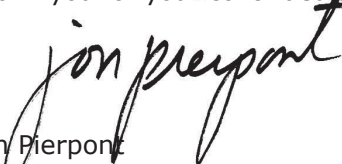
The mission of RSO is to educate and empower refugees in Utah to achieve their dreams through quality services offered in a collaborative, resource-rich environment. RSO envisions a strong integrated community engaged to connect refugee access to the family-sustaining employment necessary to succeed in Utah for generations to come. RSO was reorganized in April 2016 to better serve the needs of refugee customers. RSO continues to work with numerous community organizations to create and enhance programs that improve refugees' accessibility to employment necessary to succeed in Utah. With the support and counsel of the Board of Advisors and Workforce Services, RSO manages federal and state refugee funding and coordinates services for refugees in Utah.

A highlight of this past year was the November 2015 opening of the Utah Refugee Education and Training Center, in partnership with Salt Lake Community College, Utah State University and Workforce Services. The Refugee Center offers workshops and classes taught by a number of partner and refugee community organizations that help refugees along the pathway to employment and self-sustainability.

Additionally, the Utah Department of Public Safety and Workforce Services began a partnership to ensure that the entire community, both refugee and welcoming communities alike, are safe from violent extremism. RSO and Public Safety are implementing a strategy to build trust and communication between law enforcement and refugee communities. This plan includes educating refugees about law enforcement and educating law enforcement about refugees.

The State of Utah is known nationally as a welcoming place for refugees from around the world. I speak for all of RSO, Workforce Services and all partner refugee service provider agencies when I say that we appreciate your leadership and support of the refugee program in Utah. The pages to follow are specific to the various refugee programs administered by RSO. If you have any questions, please contact my office at 801-526-9207.

Thank you for your continued service to the State of Utah.



Jon Pierpont  
Chair, Board of Advisors for the Utah Refugee Services Office

# OVERVIEW



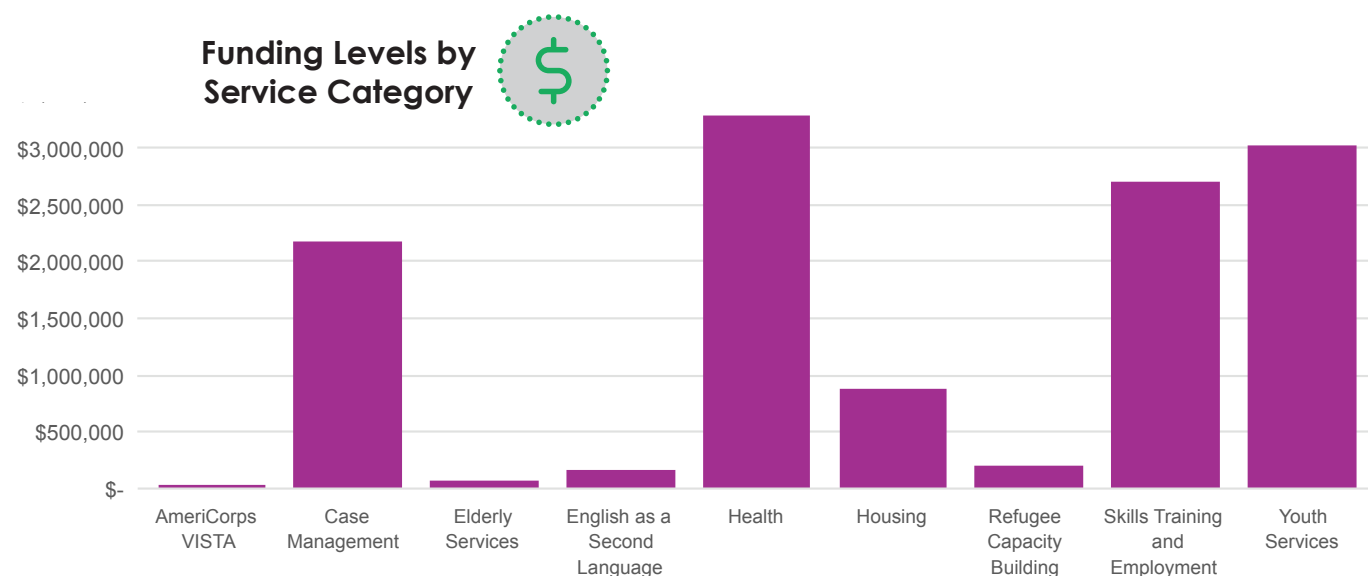
We believe **ALL REFUGEES** should have access to family-sustaining employment opportunities.

The Refugee Services Office (RSO) works in collaboration with the Refugee Services Board of Advisors, who meet on a quarterly basis to provide support and advice to RSO. The Board of Advisors provide a forum for identifying, addressing and recommending solutions to encourage the successful integration of refugees in the State of Utah.

## Department of Workforce Services

# FUNDED SERVICES

The majority of refugee services are federally funded through the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program (with the exception of \$200,000 provided by the State of Utah). RSO administers approximately \$4.3 million from TANF and \$8.9 million from ORR for refugee services in Utah. Overall funding levels are broken out by level of service listed below.



<b>AmeriCorps VISTA</b>		
	TOTAL	\$35,028
<b>Case Management</b>		
	TOTAL	\$2,187,196
<b>Elderly Services</b>		
	TOTAL	\$70,279
<b>English as a Second Language (ESL)</b>		
	TOTAL	\$171,000
<b>Health</b>		
	TOTAL	\$3,283,832
<b>Housing</b>		
	TOTAL	\$880,000
<b>Refugee Capacity Building Organizations</b>		
	TOTAL	\$200,000
<b>Skills Training and Employment</b>		
	TOTAL	\$2,704,402
<b>Youth Services</b>		
	TOTAL	\$3,025,330



“Refugees are people who, rather than give up or give in, have chosen to take the higher and harder road and are grateful for the generosity of strangers who reached out with a willing and helping hand.”

—Pamela Atkinson

# ACTIVITIES

## Utah Refugee Education and Training Center



### Center Goals

The Refugee Center serves two purposes:

1. to foster opportunities for refugees to access family-sustaining employment, and
2. to support refugee communities' efforts to find appropriate solutions towards integration.

### Core Partners

- Salt Lake Community College
- Utah Department of Workforce Services
- Utah State University



### Programming Partners

- English Skills Learning Center
- Head Start
- Microbusiness Connection Center
  - 4H
  - International Rescue Committee
  - Salt Lake Community College
  - Salt Lake County
  - SCORE
  - Spice Kitchen Incubator — International Rescue Committee
  - Utah Small Business Development Center Network
  - Utah State University
  - Utah State University Extension
- Promise South Salt Lake
- University of Utah College of Social Work
- University of Utah REFUGES Program
- WeAreMakers
  - Adobe
  - Goldman Sachs
  - Utah Asian Charitable Foundation

# Summary Data January 2016 — September 2016

## 1,901

(Total YTD: 17,117)

Average number of participants per month

Average number of activities held at the Refugee Center per month:

- Workforce Services: **29** (Total YTD: 251)
- Partners: **74** (Total YTD: 668)
- Refugee Communities: **28** (Total YTD: 248)

## Integration Activities



### English As a Second Language

Since the beginning of the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program in 1975, the ability to speak, read and write English are the major indicators for a person's ability to become self-sufficient and eventually integrate into the greater community. With the growing diversity of refugees being resettled in Utah and the low literacy levels of some of the major groups being resettled, ensuring that all refugees are literate has become increasingly challenging.

English language instruction funding provides English as a Second Language (ESL) training for refugees who are enrolled in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Humanitarian Center program

as well as classes in various locations. These contracts are funded by TANF and ORR Refugee Social Services funding.

### Refugee Capacity Building

RSO awards starter grants to refugee communities to assist in addressing issues unique to each community. Additionally, RSO provides comprehensive technical assistance to awarded communities that help them strengthen and grow successful service models and programs. Looking ahead, the Refugee Capacity Building 2017 Grant has been restructured to a project-based model, which will provide funding to refugee communities based on their community's need and the merit of the programs or objectives they are working to accomplish. RSO will provide support to all refugee communities in planning and developing their individual programs as well as continued support with implementation.

### Refugee School Impact Grant

RSO administers \$254,034 in Refugee School Impact program funding, which is currently allocated to Granite School District and Salt Lake School District. The Refugee School Impact Grant allocations are based on the number of newly arrived population ages 5 to 18 for the previous two fiscal years. The central goals of the Refugee School Impact Grant are to strengthen academic performance and facilitate social adjustment of school-age refugees and



other populations served by ORR. Specifically, RSO focuses these efforts on 1) college and career readiness, 2) leadership development, and 3) education and community awareness. The grant's primary objectives include:

- Broad partnerships focused on newly arriving ORR-served youth to ensure coordination for effective planning and successful program implementation while avoiding duplication of services.
- Specialized approaches suited for newly arriving ORR-served populations such as cultural orientation, parent/teacher meetings and school orientations.
- Programming that supports integration of ORR-served youth into school systems such as ESL, mentoring and group activities.



School districts are given the latitude to implement innovative programs to fulfill the grant's goal and objectives. RSO monitors, tracks and provides support to the school districts to help ensure they are fulfilling their contractual obligations and best supporting refugee youth and their families.

### **Services For Older Refugees**

ORR has granted the State of Utah \$75,000 to fund senior programs. RSO currently has three refugee-specific senior center programs for the Bhutanese community (30 individuals), the Congolese and Burundian communities (10 individuals), and the Sudanese community (20 individuals). Programs offered include citizenship and English courses. RSO is working with Salt Lake County to expand these programs into more senior centers.

For the period of June 2016 through September 2016, Salt Lake City Aging and Adult Services provided 54 hours of transportation and interpreting services to 16 senior refugees from Sudan and South Sudan. Transportation services from the refugees' homes to the Taylorsville Senior Center allowed them to attend ESL classes (provided by Salt Lake County) and participate in other activities at the senior center to help them overcome isolation.





## **World Refugee Day**

Nearly 3,000 people attended last year's celebration on June 4, 2016, at Liberty Park in Salt Lake City. The annual event gives the community the opportunity to share and learn about cultures from around the world. The festival includes a citizenship ceremony, music, dance, soccer and volleyball tournaments, bounce houses, food and children's activities. Local refugee entrepreneurs command the food tents and global marketplace. In 2016, booths were added for refugee community organizations to share their cultural heritage and engage festival-goers in learning more about their experiences. Partnerships with Youthlinc and Promise South Salt Lake, Salt Lake County Library Services and the East African Refugee Goat Project of Utah of the International Rescue Committee provided youth participants with a wide range of activities and learning opportunities.

Through the generosity of many donors and local organizations, RSO secured \$15,875 in sponsorships and utilized \$12,087 for the 2016 event — providing a starting amount of \$5,202 for the 2017 event. RSO aims to enhance the event by:

1. Integration — World Refugee Day is an opportunity for the mainstream community to interact and learn about the refugees now living in their community, to make friends with their neighbors from around the world and share experiences.
2. Education — World Refugee Day is an opportunity for the agencies who work for and with refugees to educate the wider community about the value that refugees bring as friends, neighbors, colleagues, artists, musicians and much more.
3. Celebration — World Refugee Day is a celebration of the strength, courage and perseverance of millions of refugees who fled their homes in search of a better life, of freedom from oppression and a future for their children. Celebrated worldwide in more than 100 countries, it is a day to celebrate not just surviving but living.



**WORLD  
REFUGEE  
DAY**

## **Event Partners:**

- American Red Cross
- Cache Refugee & Immigrant Connection
- Catholic Community Services
- Children's Service Society
- Cotopaxi
- English Skills Learning Center
- Goldman Sachs
- Help Me Grow Utah
- International Rescue Committee
  - East African Refugee Goat Project of Utah
  - Spice Kitchen Incubator
- Promise South Salt Lake
- Refugee & Immigrant Center — Asian Association of Utah
- Salt Lake City
- Salt Lake Community College
- Salt Lake County Library Services
- Salt Lake County Office of Community Innovation
- South Salt Lake
- United Way
- University Neighborhood Partners
- Utah Department of Public Safety
- Utah Department of Workforce Services
- Utah Division of Arts & Museums
- Utah Health & Human Rights
- V School
- Youthlinc

## Employment Activities



### **Case Management**

Since 2009, TANF and ORR Refugee Social Services have funded two-year case management for all newly arrived refugees. Extended case management is the foundation of refugee services in Utah, connecting refugees to resources that will improve their potential self-sufficiency and integration into the communities in which they live. Over the past year, agencies offering case management services have been developing an outcome-based case management assessment. This assessment will capture progress toward refugee goals within five outcome categories: community and family support, education, employment, health and housing.

From January 1, 2016, to June 30, 2016, 745 individuals were resettled through Catholic Community Services and the International Rescue Committee.

### **Humanitarian Center**

In 2009, the Humanitarian Center Project was created to teach English and provide job training to 150 individuals (75 referred by Workforce Services and 75 referred by Latter-day Saint bishops) for 12 months at a time. A partnership between Workforce Services, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and various local refugee service providers, it is the only program of its kind in the U.S. In Federal FY 2016, 62 participants completed the program, and 40 participants found jobs (a 65 percent placement rate).

### **Refugee Supportive Housing Assistance**

#### *Refugee Employment Subsidized Housing*



In February 2009, Workforce Services developed a housing subsidy program for single-parent households who were preparing to work. The program's policy and procedure underwent a large revision in late 2014 that resulted in the Refugee Employment Subsidized Housing program, in partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Salt Lake. The current five-year contract runs from Feb. 1, 2016, through Jan. 31, 2017. There are 38 refugee households currently enrolled in the program. Since the start of the contract period in February, 32 households have exited

the program, 14 of which exited with employment and increased self-sufficiency.

#### *Bud Bailey Case Management*

The Bud Bailey Apartment Community opened its doors in September 2014. There are 136 units with 45 units reserved for housing vouchers assigned to refugee families. Currently, there are approximately 87 households with occupants who have refugee or immigrant backgrounds.

In January 2015, RSO entered into a contract agreement with the Housing Authority of the County of Salt Lake to hire two case managers to provide case management services to the 45 refugee voucher households. The three main areas of focus for these cases are:

1. Housing stability
2. Financial capability/self-sufficiency
3. Family services for after-school programs

### **Targeted Assistance Grant**

The Targeted Assistance Grant Program helps refugees obtain employment in a one-year time period in order to achieve self-sufficiency. This grant was awarded to the Refugee and Immigrant Center of the Asian Association of Utah to provide this service. Through targeted assistance, 403 individuals received employment case management services, and 270 individuals (67 percent) obtained jobs during the last contract year.

## **Additional Coordination and Key Activities**

### **AmeriCorps VISTA**

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is the domestic equivalent of the Peace Corps and one of several national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. VISTA members commit to:

- Living and serving in some of the nation's poorest urban and rural areas for a full year
- Subsisting on a living stipend that equates to less than \$5.00/hour
- Creating and expanding sustainable programs for local organizations and nonprofits



With passion, commitment and hard work, their programs are designed to bring individuals and communities out of poverty.

RSO houses the Utah Refugee VISTA Project, which is made up of 13 members at five organizations assisting the refugee communities in Utah in building their capacity to become self-sufficient. Many of RSO's VISTA members have completed their year of service and continue to work with refugees in Utah. The VISTA Project strives to assist refugees in three ways:

1. Integrate — Involving and incorporating resettled refugees as equals into the welcoming community.
2. Educate — Bringing both refugees and the welcoming community members together to learn from each other and work together.
3. Assist — Developing programs to assist refugees in the process of integrating into their new home.

### **Community Resource Specialist Team**

The Community Resource Specialist (CRS) team's mission is to provide support for TANF-eligible refugee families by developing greater connections to existing resources; creating new resources as needed; and supporting community capacity to maintain, network and utilize resources. Services are focused on refugees who have been in the U.S. two years or longer and meet TANF priority areas one and two (provide assistance to needy families so that children can

be cared for in their own homes and reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage). The CRS team has focused on providing services, support and community capacity building to five refugee communities: Burundi, Congolese, Bhutanese, Burmese, Sudanese and South Sudanese.

The CRS team's first year of supportive services was centered on case management, crisis interventions, developing new supportive programs, connecting refugees to existing training and helping refugees retain employment and find new jobs. The second year was centered on community capacity building by working closely with community leaders to identify community strengths and resources and providing support for communities to increase their capacity to help themselves.

2016 is the CRS team's third and final year serving these five refugee communities. Each CRS team member is working with the refugee communities to transition services, support and ongoing issues to community leaders. The team is working with refugee leaders to identify community priorities, engage other refugee members that are able to provide support to their community and connect the five communities to other support staff at RSO. RSO staff will continue to provide support to individuals, families and communities as needed to help ensure refugees have access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services to successfully integrate.

From January 2016 to September 2016, the CRS team served 672 adults and 396 youth, helping them access services in the areas of health, housing, education, training, employment, family and community support.

### **Refugee Services Fund**

As of the end of SFY 2016, the Refugee Services Fund had a balance of \$22,885.73. From July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016, RSO received \$8,386.04 in donations to the fund and expended \$8,812.84 to support refugees.

Funds were utilized for:



- Rental assistance — \$2,176.88
  - Seven families assisted
- Youth services — \$5,983.32
  - Annual youth conference — \$2,449.50
  - Workshops and events — \$3,533.82
- Women's services — \$470.52
  - 18 women's meetings and workshops
- Sewing project — \$188.49





### **Utah Department of Public Safety**

In November 2015, in response to heightened security concerns surrounding terrorism worldwide, Governor Herbert directed the Utah Department of Public Safety to conduct a review of the federal screening process for refugees and security procedures related to refugee resettlement in Utah. This process led to a partnership between RSO and Public Safety, with a Public Safety officer assigned to be the refugee liaison and work with local law enforcement, resettlement agencies and other organizations to be a resource for and to build relationships with Utah's refugee community. This is a unique partnership in Utah and nationally.

Between February 2016 and November 2016, the efforts of Public Safety have resulted in the following:

- 1,026 refugee contacts
- 34 U.S. law cultural orientations at Catholic Community Services and International Rescue Committee
- 4 youth dialogue presentations at local high schools
- 8 community civic dialogues
- 2,000+ refugee contacts at community events
- 3 local law enforcement coordination meetings
- 5 cases opened or referred to local law enforcement of potential refugee victimization
- Program development for Countering Violent Extremism, in partnership with the Islamic Society of Greater Salt Lake
- Training program development for refugee leaders and police, in partnership with RSO and refugee community leaders
- Development of training videos for law enforcement, in partnership with RSO



## **Youth Coordination**

The Refugee Youth Services Coordinator provides collaboration, support and coordination with the resettlement agencies, school districts and refugee service providers to ensure that refugee youth feel supported. RSO's goal for refugee youth is to ensure they all have access to the same opportunities regardless of the resettlement agency with which they arrive, their age upon arrival in the U.S., and in which school district they are enrolled. The youth coordinator works to maintain partner engagement, collaborate with appropriate state agencies, advise applicable committees and boards on refugee youth issues, and implement innovative programming.

### *2016 Youth Activity Highlights:*

- 20 presentations were provided to organizations on best practices for working with refugee youth.
- 34 youth have been served in the ongoing "College and Career Readiness Workshop Series," including career exploration, FAFSA and admissions help, since July 2016.
- 60 refugee girls from five communities participated in a volleyball tournament in conjunction with World Refugee Day.
- 33 girls from nine communities attended the "Girls Get Together" after-school program, partnered with Sunnyvale Community Center.
- 41 refugee youth completed the Salt Lake County Youth Summer Internship Program.
- 20 Burundi and Congolese youth completed the "Healthy Relationships" workshops.
- 175 youth attended the 6th annual Refugee Youth Conference. Organized by RSO, the conference's goal is to encourage refugee youth to pursue post-secondary education and/or certification programs.
- Salt Lake School District and Educational Equity staff, youth representatives from Catholic Community Services and International Rescue Committee met monthly to coordinate the best ways to support youth and identify needs.
- Local school districts, in coordination with the Utah State Board of Education, implemented a standardized document process for enrolling refugee youth and a standardized family history form to better understand the needs of refugee families with which the school districts are working.





# SUCCESS STORIES

## PAUL

### **PAUL IS A REFUGEE YOUTH FROM THE CONGO.**

Before his recent resettlement in Utah, Paul and his family fled war-torn areas of the Congo and spent many years in refugee camps. He faced adversity through being separated from his family and going through the challenges related to living in a refugee camp. This past summer, Paul successfully completed an internship at Salt Lake County Library Services as part of the 2016 Summer Youth Internship Program managed by Salt Lake County Youth Services and RSO. Despite the trauma he has experienced, Paul was incredibly positive, eager to learn and responsible in his internship position.

As part of the internship, Paul learned basic library skills such as sorting, shelving and customer service. He worked with expert librarians and program managers to develop storytelling programs that were shared with the public. He observed several library programs, created program outlines and compiled visual aids to complement storytelling presentations. He also worked with the library's marketing team to design promotional materials for distribution in the library branches and in the community. His heartfelt retelling of his long journey to Utah was educational and inspiring. Paul expressed gratitude for the summer internship opportunity, which has given him additional skills and networking connections.

## KOROMA

### **KOROMA ARRIVED IN UTAH AS A REFUGEE FROM LIBERIA.**

He brought with him his wife, two adopted sons and a disabled granddaughter. Koroma's wife is still suffering the adverse effects of trauma and has not been able to work. Koroma started working upon arrival at the University Hospital and was employed there until 2013, when he suffered a lumbar disk herniation. He was advised to have surgery, but it did not improve his health condition. On Jan. 1, 2016, Koroma turned 65 years old and had hoped he could retire with benefits. However, Koroma was informed that he needed to complete his 40 quarters of employment in order to receive his full retirement package. With help from RSO, he recently started a job at the Columbus Center Warehouse in West Valley City, where he works with other seniors. Koroma is happy he will have the opportunity to complete his 40 quarters. His two sons graduated from college, and both are now married. His granddaughter graduated from high school in June 2016. Koroma is active in his community and plays an important role in preserving the culture of his community.

## SUCCESS STORIES CONTINUED

# MARY

### **MARY CAME TO THE UNITED STATES FROM BURUNDI.**

She has five children all under the age of 10. When she was 13 years old, the militia attacked her village and killed both her parents, family members and neighbors. She and some of the other girls were taken to the jungle. She was raped by a group of militia men every night, and all her children were born as a result of these assaults. One night the militia camp was attacked by the government army; some of the militia men were killed, and the rest ran away. Mary and her children made their way to a refugee camp and, after three years, were resettled in Utah.

Upon arrival in the U.S., Mary was sad and confused and did not know how she would build a new life for herself and children. Mary received help and encouragement from her Workforce Services' employment counselor,

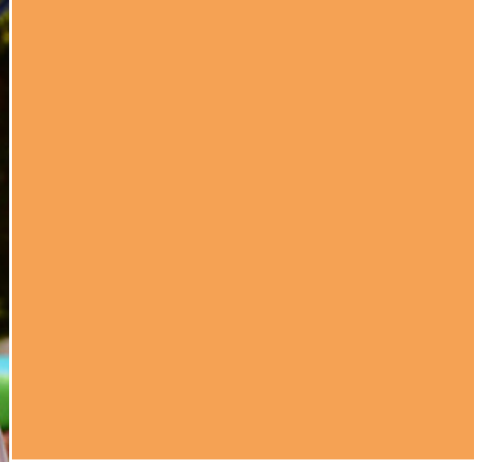
RSO staff and staff from her local resettlement agency to access resources and navigate the new and complicated systems she encountered in the U.S. She participated in the Workforce Services and Humanitarian Center program for 12 months, where she did an on-the-job training for four hours and ESL for four hours each day. She purchased a car and had paid it off in full in two years. She later obtained a job at the Salt Lake International Airport with a rental car company. Mary's leadership skills helped her become promoted within one year. She is also a trusted leader and a go-to person in her community. Mary is a wonderful mother to her children who all continue to do well in school and are actively involved in their community. She is preparing for the U.S. citizenship test. Her story is one of resilience. She does not feel like a victim — she is a survivor.

# CONCLUSION

The Refugee Services Office remains committed to providing the highest quality and best practices of services for refugees who now call Utah home. The work remains for both newly arrived refugees and individuals who have lived in Utah for five, 10, 15 or more years. As part of Workforce Services, the Refugee Services Office will continue to develop, fund and support services that allow refugees to become self-sufficient, integrated members of the Utah community.



Visit  
**[refugee.utah.gov](https://refugee.utah.gov)**  
to learn more about the  
Refugee Services Office.





***Equal Opportunity Employer/Program***

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities by calling 801-526-9240. Individuals with speech or hearing impairments may call the Relay Utah by dialing 711. Spanish Relay Utah: 1-888-346-3162.



[refugee.utah.gov](https://refugee.utah.gov)

